

MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
CITY COUNCIL

August 3, 2020

Butch McSwain)	Sally W. Sandy, City Manager
Chris Jernigan)	Louis E. Vinay, Jr., City Attorney
Chris Hawkins)	

Councilmen

Mayor Thompson was unable to attend the meeting due to illness.
Mayor Pro-tem Cato attended the meeting remotely.

The meeting was called to order in the Council Chamber at City Hall at 3:30 p.m. by Mayor Pro-tem Wendy Cato.

Others in attendance included: Randy Loop, CoMPAS Technician; Sonja Marston, Assistant City Manager; Jessie Parris, Finance Director; Greg Branch, CoMPAS Director; Bryant Lindsay, interested citizen.

Sally Sandy, City Manager, explained that the purpose of this meeting was to receive a business assessment report from Dave Stockton, a consultant with Uptown Services, regarding CoMPAS. Stockton also attended the meeting remotely.

The City Manager then gave a brief history of the relationship between CoMPAS and Uptown Services. Stockton then presented a PowerPoint showing where CoMPAS was in 2016 and how things have changed over the last 4 years.

Stockton presented information and statistics that showed the actions taken in 2016 were critical. Today the financial outlook of CoMPAS is positive and internet growth is outpacing the customer's losses in video. Stockton's opinion is that the CoMPAS numbers prove that broadband investment is wise. He also still believes that offering video still makes sense for Morganton.

Stockton re-emphasized the need to continue to charge for video so it pays for itself. He sees no relief in sight for rising costs of programming. He believes NCTC getting in the retransmission negotiation business will be positive but he thinks fall 2020 negotiations will result in subscriber cost increases which could reach \$10/month.

Greg Branch, CoMPAS Director, shared information with the Council on how fast our bandwidth continues to be used up. He also shared that our digital conversion time-frame has been extended due to COVID-19 and difficulty getting into people's homes. He also shared how work-at-home and school-at-home has increased our internet

subscriptions. We continue to see growth in commercial phone customers. We briefly discussed a “do-it-yourself” roll-out of DTAs for the conversion.

Stockton recommends keeping the course of the digital upgrade. He presented a five-year CIP that includes investment in growing bandwidth capabilities and looking at 1-gig service in the future. He also referenced needs for updating software/billing capabilities.

There was no action taken at this meeting.

Adjournment – Motion was made by Councilman Hawkins, seconded by Councilman Jernigan, and approved unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 4:39 p.m.

Preparation of Minutes. These minutes were prepared by Mikela D. Russell, Assistant City Clerk. Copies of all resolutions, ordinances and orders referenced in these minutes are intended to be incorporated into these minutes as if fully set forth herein. Prior to including them into the official minute book, the minutes have been read and approved by the City Manager and the City Attorney, then distributed to each member of the City Council for further review and final approval, at a subsequent Council Meeting.

Mayor

Assistant City Clerk